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THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THE CHRIST,

BASED ON LUKE.

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STUDIES XLI. AND XLII.—CONTROVERSIES IN JERUSALEM. LUKE

20 : 1-47.

Remark.—It is desirable that in beginning each "study" the entire passage assigned be read over rapidly and the main divisions of the narrative noted.

I. EXAMINATION OF THE MATERIAL.

[It will be noted that the following order is observed invariably in this work; (1) the verse or section is read and its contents stated in a general way; (2) important or difficult words and phrases are studied; (3) a complete statement of the contents of the verse or section is formed in view of the work already done; (4) the religious teaching is sought.]

§ 1. Chapter 20 : 1-8.

1. Read the passage and note a subject, e. g. *Jesus' Authority questioned*.
2. Of words and phrases study the following: (1) *chief priests and the Scribes*, etc. (20 : 1), i. e. the representatives of the three orders of the Sanhedrim; (2) *what authority* (20 : 2), of prophet, teacher or the Christ? (3) *who gave*, etc. (a) inquiry into the basis of the authority, (b) motive of the question? (4) *the baptism* (20 : 4), i. e. his work as represented by this symbol.
3. The student may make a condensed statement of the passage.
4. When an inquirer is not honest and sincere, he will get no light from Jesus.

§ 2. Chapter 20 : 9-18.

1. The student may read the passage and decide on a subject.
2. The following important or difficult words and phrases are to be studied: (1) *a vineyard* (20 : 9), recalls Isa. 5 : 3-7; (2) *give him of the fruit* (20 : 10), either (a) as rent for the land, or (b) as his rightful property, (c) which they neglect to produce; (3) *beloved* (20 : 13), characteristic of Luke; (4) *son*, does Jesus

claim here to be God's son? (5) *that the inheritance*, etc. (20 : 14), how could they have imagined any such result? (6) *others* (20 : 16), who? (7) *the stone* etc. (20 : 17), note (a) the figure itself, (b) the original application, (c) Jesus' use of it.

3. A statement of the thought is as follows: *He speaks in a parable of "a vineyard which the owner rented to husbandmen and went far away. He sends three servants in due time to them one after the other to receive the fruits, but all are ill-treated, each worse than the other. The son is, thereupon, sent, but instead of paying him regard, they kill him, hoping thus to possess the vineyard themselves. Will not the owner destroy them and give the vineyard to others?" When the people reply, "Far be it from him," Jesus adds, "The scripture tells of the rejected stone which was afterward put in the highest place. Fall over it and you shall be sore harmed. Should it fall upon you, you shall be utterly destroyed."*
4. The student may consider and decide on a religious lesson here.

§ 3. Chapter 20 : 19-26.

1. After reading the verses, consider the subject: *Discussion about Tribute.*
2. The student may make a special study of (1) *against them* (20 : 19), (2) *righteous* (20 : 20), (3) *acceptest not the person* (20 : 21), (4) *craftiness* (20 : 23), (5) *image* (20 : 24), (6) v. 25, (7) *before the people* (20 : 26).
3. The summary of the thought is as follows: *At once the authorities, had they dared, would have seized him for his attack on them. They send men to engage him in treasonable discussion. He is asked by them, after compliments to his teaching, whether "giving tribute to Cæsar is according to God's law." He takes a penny and calling attention to Cæsar's image and name thereon, says, "Give to Cæsar what is his, and to God what is His," an answer which amazed and silenced them.*
4. A religious thought of the passage is found in Jesus' principle that we have a duty toward the state as well as toward God.

§ 4. Chapter 20 : 27-40.

1. Criticise the statement of the subject: *Questions about the Resurrection.*
2. Important words are: (1) *Sadducees* (20 : 27), their history and opinions? (2) *resurrection*, i. e. of the body; (3) *asked*, their motive? (4) *Moses wrote* (20 : 28), cf. Deut. 25 : 5, 6, note the custom; (5) *that world* (20 : 35), i. e. as distinct from "this world," implying that it is in the era of the "resurrection;" (6) *Moses shewed* (20 : 37), what light on Jesus' idea of the authorship of Exodus? (7) *all live*, etc. (20 : 38), i. e. (a) "all creatures," or (b) all his children such as in v. 37; (8) *well said* (20 : 39), spirit of the reply?
3. Study the following statement of the contents: *Sadducees who deny the resurrection, come and ask how Moses' law about levirate marriage is to result, in the resurrection, to a woman who in obedience to it, has been married successively to seven brothers. He replies by declaring that "the marriage custom of this world does not apply to the other world of the resurrection life. There is a resurrection, however, as Moses' record of God's pledge to the patriarchs shows, for to have Him as your God means to live." The Scribes applaud his answer, and none dare to question him further.*
4. A religious thought of supreme importance is the assurance that they who are God's shall live unto Him.

§ 5. Chapter 20 : 41-44.

1. The student may read and decide on a subject.
2. (1) *He said* (20 : 41), a new attitude ; (2) *say they*, who ? (3) *David himself saith* (20 : 42), light on Jesus' idea of the authorship of this psalm ? (4) *Lord* (20 : 44), a higher than a human or temporal Christ.
3. A condensation of the verses is as follows: *He asks them, How can the statement be made that the Christ is David's son, when David calls him Lord, saying in the Psalms, "the Lord told my Lord to sit at his right hand till he had subdued his enemies ?" Can he be son and Lord of David, too ?*
4. We are brought face to face with the great assertion that Jesus the Christ is more than a human being. As such, what shall be our relation to him ?

§ 6. Chapter 20 : 45-47.

1. Read the verses and note a subject: *The Final Warning*.
2. (1) *In the hearing*, etc. (20 : 43), significance of this ? (2) *in long robes* (20 : 46), i. e. (a) official pride, or (b) to attract attention ; (3) *love*, etc., all significant of what ? (4) *devour widows' houses* (20 : 47), (a) by their superior knowledge of law, or (b) by religious chicanery.
3. The student may make a brief statement of the thought.
4. Note carefully the course and issue of selfish pride, its presence even in religion.

II. CLASSIFICATION OF THE MATERIAL.

1. Contents and Summary.

- 1) **The Contents.** The following table is to be made familiar.

CONTROVERSIES IN JERUSALEM.

- § 1. JESUS' AUTHORITY QUESTIONED.
- § 2. PARABLE OF THE WICKED HUSBANDMEN.
- § 3. DISCUSSION ABOUT TRIBUTE.
- § 4. QUESTIONS ABOUT THE RESURRECTION.
- § 5. THE QUOTATION AND ITS LESSON.
- § 6. THE FINAL WARNING.

- 2) **The Summary.** The student may sum up the several passages into a statement of the whole.

2. Observations upon the Material.

The following "observations" upon the passage are to be criticised.

272) 20 : 1. The work of Jesus in Jerusalem is interrupted and hampered by the controversies into which the religious authorities persist in drawing him.

273) 20 : 2. The design of this question seems to be either (1) to overawe him, or (2) to discredit him with the people.

- 274) 20 : 4, 5. The question of John's prophetic authority was not merely a catch question but was an argument from John on behalf of his own authority.*
- 275) 20 : 2. Rabbis received their authorization to teach from well-known and accredited masters.
- 276) 20 : 9. Jesus even now would endeavor to save the people from the consequences of rejecting him.†
- 277) 20 : 9-15. The parable represents in a general way the history of the Jewish Theocracy in its relation to God up to and including its dealing with Jesus.
- 278) 20 : 13, 41-44. Jesus seems to claim here that he himself as the Christ is more than man.‡
- 279) 20 : 16. The people catch a glimpse of the awful future without being moved thereby to change their ways, and hence Jesus calls their attention to the result (vs. 17, 18).
- 280) 20 : 25. The reply of Jesus did not evade the issue, but allowed the duty of paying tribute. He had no design of revolution. By that answer he escaped the danger of Roman hostility but lost the help of the people. §
- 281) This is the first time that the Sadducees have been brought into relations with Jesus. ||
- 282) 20 : 37. The answer of Jesus shows how deep and new was his understanding and exposition of the Old Testament.

* He identified his authority with John's, so far as the greater more than covers the less. They stood upon the same platform, authenticated by the same direct inspiration and accredited by the same power. . . . If John was of God, what he said of Jesus was of God. An acceptance of John's baptism and teaching as heavenly, involved the acceptance of the claims of Jesus who was the end of all John's preaching. *Vallings*, p. 165.

† The very character of this parable showed that it did not proclaim an unalterable fate, but was only a threatening prophecy which the timely repentance of the people, either now or in the days to come, might nullify. It is involved in the nature of the parable, that it does not sketch a history, but exhibits a divine law through the regulations of natural life. The husbandmen must necessarily be discharged if they continue obstinate. *Weiss*, III., p. 245.

‡ What the scribes persistently repelled and in the end condemned him for was his *assertion of Divinity*. In this passage (v. 41) he shows from their own Scriptures that whoever was Messiah must be Divine. *Pulp. Com.* II., p. 170.

The account given in this parable of the mission of the son has an important bearing on . . . the personal self-consciousness of Christ. . . . The son is described as the only and well-beloved son of his father and it is natural to suppose that as that son represents the Speaker, He claims for Himself all that he ascribes to the former. *Bruce, Parab. Teach.*, p. 457.

§ A rigid alternative is put before him : theoretically and practically He must solve the great question which is burning in the heart of every devout Israelite. . . . The usual idea is quite mistaken, which supposes that Jesus evaded the question after all, and got Himself cleverly out of the dilemma. . . . By placing the duty of a subject alongside duty to God, He takes the point from the deceptive alternative, about which Jewish Radicalism boasted. He does not say directly that the duty of submissiveness is conjoined with duty to God, or limited thereby ; but he indicates that the two are in no wise contradictory, but are equally incumbent. . . . With these words Jesus frustrated the plan of His enemies. They could not summon Him for treason before the Roman procurator. But He knew that with these same words He had pronounced His own sentence of condemnation. This was His final refusal to countenance a Jewish revolution. It was the destruction of all hopes of a political kingdom of the Messiah, and the people could never forgive such a bitter disappointment. *Weiss*, III., pp. 239, 240.

|| It was an answer which elevated the controversy into quite another sphere, where there was no conflict between what was due to God and to Man. Nor did it speak harshly of the Nationalist aspirations, nor yet plead the cause of Rome. It said not whether the rule of Rome was right or should be permanent—but only what all must have felt to be Divine. *Edersheim*, II., p. 386 (472).

|| This is, it may be noted, the one occasion in the Gospel history in which our Lord comes into direct collision with the Sadducees. On the whole, while distinctly condemning and refuting their characteristic error, the tone in which He speaks is less stern than that in which He addresses the Pharisees. *Plumptre*, p. 332.

283) 20 : 41-44. Jesus brings out here (1) the folly of those who expected merely a human Christ, (2) the reasonableness of his claim to be more than man.*

284) 20 : 46, 47. In this warning, given at so much greater length in Mt. 23, Jesus passed from argument to scorching denunciation of the Pharisees and Scribes.†

3. Topics for Study.

- 1) **The Political Situation.** [Obs. 280]: (1) Note the existence of Cæsar's rule in Jerusalem (Lk. 20 : 20-25). (2) Learn something of the way this rule was regarded (a) by the people in general, (b) by the Pharisees, (c) by the Herodians. (3) Consider how Jesus was situated in relation to this rule, (a) what was expected of him as the Christ in national affairs, (b) the probable attitude of the Romans in view of this expectation. (4) From this point of view consider the critical importance of this question and its answer (vs. 23, 25). (5) Study the answer of Jesus (v. 25), and decide whether (a) it was an evasion, (b) it was a virtual surrender to Cæsar, (c) it offered a new solution of the problem. (6) If the latter, endeavor to state the principle which Jesus here laid down, and observe the position of the Apostolic Church in relation to it (Rom. 13 : 1-2 ; 1 Pet. 2 : 13-17 ; Acts. 4 : 19).
- 2) **Jesus as a Reasoner.** † (1) Recall the part taken by Jesus in the discussions of Lk. 20 : 1-47. (2) Seek examples of the following characteristics in his answers, (a) candor, (b) simplicity, (c) boldness, (d) keenness, (e) gentleness, (f) severity, (g) wit. (3) Inquire as to the evidence of (a) his use of verbal quibbling answers intended to puzzle, (b) arguments based on literal and formal grounds, (c) arguments on broad, spiritual principles, (d) a marvelous insight into the O. T. Scriptures and into the human mind. (4) In a general way sum up the purpose and the results of these discussions as relates to (a) the hostile questioners, (b) Jesus and his disciples, (c) the people.

* This, he pointed out to them, was the old faith, the doctrine taught in their own inspired Scriptures. But this was not the doctrine of the Jews in the time of our Lord. They . . . expected for their Messiah a mere "beloved man." *Pul. Com.* II., p. 190.

The simple solution of the question must be sought for in the fact that the Messiah has no specific dignity, because of His being a descendant of David, but He descends from David in accordance with the promise, for He is chosen by God to that unique dignity without which He cannot bring about the consummation of salvation . . . So long as the Davidic descent of the Messiah was made the starting point, the ascension of David's throne, in the sense of the political expectations, was the indispensable condition for the fulfilment of His vocation. But if it was once acknowledged that as simply belonging to David's line, he had no claim to that unique dignity, then it was plainly a matter of indifference for the attainment of that end whether He ever ascended the throne of His fathers as popular expectation expected Him to do. *Weiss*, III., p. 201.

† At last He carried the war into their own territory, and convicted them of such ignorance or lack of candor as completely put them to shame before the onlookers. Then when He had silenced them, He let loose the storm of His indignation, and delivered against them the Philippic which is recorded in the twenty-third chapter of Matthew. Giving unrestrained expression to the pent-up criticism of a lifetime, He exposed their hypocritical practices in sentences that fell like strokes of lightning, and made them a scorn and laughing stock, not only to the hearers then, but to all the world since. It was the final breach between Him and them. *Stalker, Life of Christ*, p. 118.

‡ A most attractive and profitable discussion of this subject is found in *Stalker's Imago Christi*, Chapt. 15, "Christ as a Controversialist."

4. Religious Teaching.

The student may select a subject, such as "The Use and the Ethics of Controversy," or "Religion and Politics," or any other with which this chapter is concerned, and work out its teachings.

STUDIES XLIII. AND XLIV.—THE FUTURE. LUKE 21 : 1-38.

Remark.—It is desirable that in beginning this "study" (1) the material of the preceding "study" be reviewed, and (2) the entire passage assigned be read over rapidly and the main divisions of the narrative noted.

I. EXAMINATION OF THE MATERIAL.

[It will be noted that the following order is observed invariably in this work ; (1) the verse or section is read and its contents stated in a general way ; (2) important or difficult words and phrases are studied ; (3) a complete statement of the contents of the verse or section is formed in view of the work already done ; (4) the religious teaching is sought.]

§ 1. Chapter 21 : 1-4.

1. Read the verses and observe the subject, e. g. : *The Widow's Offerings*.
2. Following are important words and phrases : (1) *looked up* (21 : 1), from where he was seated, cf. Mk. 12 : 41 ; (2) *gifts*, not for the poor but for the temple service ; (3) *all the living* (21 : 4), how did Jesus know this ?
3. The student may make the statement of thought.
4. The religious teaching seems to be that our devotion to God is measured, not by the amount of our gifts, but by the self-denial manifested in them for His service.

§ 2. Chapter 21 : 5-11.

1. The subject of vs. 5-36 is one, i. e. *Teaching concerning the Future* ; read the passage vs. 5-11, and note the subject, *The Prospect of World-commotions*.
2. Important and difficult words and phrases are : (1) *some* (21 : 5), cf. Mk. 13 : 1 ; (2) *they asked* (21 : 7), cf. Mk. 13 : 3 for the persons and place ; (3) v. 7, note two questions (a) "when," (b) "what sign ;" (4) *these things* (21 : 7), (a) according to v. 6 they are the destruction of the temple, (b) but cf. Mt. 24 : 3 for the addition of the "end of the age," (c) does the reference in Lk. limit the whole discourse ? (5) *he said* (21 : 8), to what does his answer apply ? (6) *my name*, i. e. as the Christ ; (7) *the time*, for what ? (8) *come to pass first* (21 : 9), i. e. before the end ; (9) *not immediately*, i. e. one does not follow close on the other ; (10) *nation* (21 : 10), are particular nations referred to ?
3. A condensation of the thought is : *Jesus answers a comment on the beauty of the temple by predicting its total destruction. They ask the time and the sign of this thing. He replies, "False Christs will try to lead you astray ; great social disturbances and terrible commotions in nature will come long before the end."*
4. The thought of the passage connects itself with the insight into things which Jesus had—they saw the goodly outside, he saw the real truth : what this insight should mean for us.